discrepancies and achieve their objectives, especially those relaing to implementation of the Water Act, 1974, to help provide safe drinking water?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) The Computroller and Auditor General's report regarding performance of Central and State Polution Control Boards especially those relating to prevention and control of pollution of water bodies in various parts of the country has been studied.

(b) The steps taken include the following:

(i) Periodic interaction meetings are held with the personnel at various levels of the Pollution Control Boards (PCBs)1;

(ii) State Governments have been advised to induct professionals in the Pollution Control Boards;

(iii) Guidelines have been framed for streamlining the procedures for issuance of consent and authorisation by the Pollution Control Boards;

(iv) Technical & financial support has been provided for strengthening of Pollution Control Boards; and

(v) Minimal National Standards for control of pollution from various sources have been laid down by the Central Pollution Control Boards for implementation through the concerned State Pollution Control Boards.

Punishment for cruelty to wild animals

†211. SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a demand for drastic punishment to those who commit cruelty against wild animals;

(b) if so, whether Government have considered this demand, so far; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The proposals to enhance the penalties for infringement of the provisions of Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act are under consideration of the Government.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.